

IOWA BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS

PRESS RELEASE

For release, July 14, 2004

Recently, the Iowa Board of Medical Examiners took the following action:

Charles C. Cook, M.D., a 50 year-old physician from Bettendorf, Iowa, entered into a Settlement Agreement with the Board to resolve pending disciplinary charges. On May 13, 2004, the Board charged Dr. Cook with pleading guilty to a felony crime in violation of Iowa law and with the inability to practice medicine with reasonable skill and safety due to the excessive use of drugs. On October 31, 2003, Dr. Cook pleaded guilty to a felony, in Scott County District Court, Iowa. Dr. Cook was charged with fraudulently obtaining controlled substances without a legitimate prescription. The Board also received information indicating that Dr. Cook was treated for an apparent drug overdose and that he continues to suffer from a serious substance abuse problem. Dr. Cook has a long history of substance abuse and medical board disciplinary action in Arkansas and Iowa. Dr. Cook's Arkansas medical license was suspended due to substance abuse in 1998 and 2001 and his Iowa medical license was suspended in 2002. Under the terms of the new Settlement Agreement, Dr. Cook's Iowa medical license is indefinitely suspended.

Perry L. Haney, M.D., a 53 year-old physician practicing in Denver, Colorado, entered into a combined Statement of Charges and Settlement Agreement with the Board. The Iowa Board charged Dr. Haney with entering into a voluntary agreement with the Colorado Medical Board which restricted his Colorado medical license. On April 21, 2003, Dr. Haney entered into a Stipulation and Final Agency Order with the Colorado Board based on concerns regarding the excessive use of massage therapy services in Dr. Haney's practice and that the amounts billed for procedures performed in his practice were excessive. Dr. Haney agreed to discontinue the use of massage therapy in his practice and he agreed to modify his billing system to decrease the cost for multiple procedures. Additionally, he agreed to submit to a medical chart review by a nationally recognized medical practice review company. Dr. Haney successfully completed the medical chart review and no major concerns were identified. Under the terms of the combined Settlement Agreement entered into with the Iowa Board, Dr. Haney was issued a Citation and Warning based on the action taken in Colorado.

Eric Jorgensen, M.D., a 43 year-old physician from St. Joseph, Missouri, had disciplinary charges filed against his Iowa medical license. The Iowa Board charged Dr. Jorgensen with being convicted of a felony in the state of Missouri and with having disciplinary action taken by the Missouri Medical Board. On June 27, 2003, Dr. Jorgensen entered a plea of guilty to possession of a controlled substance, a felony, in Missouri. On February 24, 2004, the Missouri Board revoked Dr. Jorgensen's Missouri medical license as a result of the guilty plea to the felony, a violation of the laws and rules governing the practice of medicine in Missouri. Dr. Jorgensen may not apply for reinstatement of his Missouri medical license for a period of three (3) years, or until his court-ordered criminal probation has been completed. A hearing on the Iowa disciplinary charges is scheduled for August 31, 2004.

Charles P. Pritchard, D.O., a 66 year-old physician formerly practicing in Bettendorf, Iowa, entered into a Settlement Agreement with the Board to resolve pending disciplinary charges. The Board charged Dr. Pritchard with the inability to practice medicine with reasonable skill and safety due to the excessive use of drugs and alcohol and with violating a Board Order. Under the terms of the Settlement Agreement, Dr. Pritchard voluntarily surrendered his Iowa medical license.

Nnaemeka Udoh, M.D., a 59 year-old physician from Los Angeles, California, had disciplinary charges filed against his Iowa medical license. The Iowa Board charged Dr. Udoh with being disciplined by the California Medical Board. On July 25, 2001, the California Board filed charges alleging that Dr. Udoh engaged in gross negligence and incompetence when he failed to provide appropriate treatment to a patient with a serious laceration resulting in the patient's death. Dr. Udoh entered into Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order with the California Board to resolve the pending charges. Under the terms of the California Order, Dr. Udoh's California medical license was revoked, the revocation was stayed and his license was placed probation for three years subject to certain terms and conditions. Dr. Udoh was required to successfully complete a competency assessment and clinical education program at the University of California, San Diego School of Medicine. A hearing on the Iowa disciplinary charges is scheduled for August 31, 2004.

Debbie D. Urioste, M.D., a 43 year-old physician from Walenburg, Colorado, entered into a Settlement Agreement with the Iowa Board to resolve pending disciplinary charges. The Board charged Dr. Urioste with violating the terms of an impaired physician recovery contract entered into with the Board's Iowa Physician Health Program (IPHP) (formerly the Impaired Physician Review Committee (IPRC)) and with entering into a voluntary agreement with the Colorado State Board of Medical Examiners which restricted her Colorado medical license. Dr. Urioste entered into a Stipulation and Final Order with the Colorado Board which placed limitations on her Colorado medical license due to concerns regarding her mental health. Dr. Urioste subsequently entered into an impaired physician recovery contract with the Iowa Physician Health Program (IPHP). On June 18, 1999, the IPHP referred Dr. Urioste to the Board due to non-compliance her recovery contract and the Board filed disciplinary charges against her Iowa medical license. Under the terms of the Iowa Settlement Agreement, Dr. Urioste was issued a Citation and Warning and she must notify the Board, pay a \$2,500 civil penalty and report to the IPHP, before practicing medicine under her Iowa medical license in the future.

Vernon P. Varner, M.D., a 61 year-old psychiatrist practicing in Iowa City, Iowa, entered into an Amended Settlement Agreement with the Board. On March 4, 1999, the Board filed charges against Dr. Varner alleging numerous competency-related violations in the practice of psychiatry. Dr. Varner entered into a Settlement Agreement with the Board to resolve the charges. Dr. Varner was required to complete a competency evaluation and his medical license was placed on probation for five years. He also agreed to have his practice reviewed by a Board-approved practice monitor. Dr. Varner completed the competency evaluation in April of 2000, and the program concluded that he demonstrated deficiencies in: 1) medical knowledge; 2) clinical judgment; 3) use of psychiatric medications; and 4) medical record keeping. Dr. Varner agreed to complete a 12-month education plan. At the conclusion of the education plan the assessment program concluded that many serious practice deficiencies continued to exist. Under the terms of the Amended Settlement Agreement, Dr. Varner has agreed to have his practice reviewed by a competency review panel, made up of three psychiatrists, to determine whether he is competent to continue the practice of psychiatry.